

MEETING MINUTES
ALLIGATOR CREEK WATERWAY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
October 7, 2014 – Regular Meeting
10:00 a.m. – Public Works Conference Room

Attendees: Howard Brooks, Ken Fahrbach, Ed Minzer and Mark Vaivoda

Absent: Robert Robinson (unexcused) and Michael Shaughness (excused)

County: Dawn Harrison, Matt Logan, and Sandy Wright

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. A roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

The minutes from June 5, 2014 were unanimously approved as amended.

Citizen Input on Agenda Items Only (3 Minute Limit)

- Mr. Forr stated he has a sail boat and he would like the channel to be more navigable. He also stated that he would like to see the lock expanded; it was explained that the lock is not this MSBU's responsibility and this Committee has been pursuing a 6ft dredge for over a year.
- Mr. McIntosh stated he has a problem getting out of the channel with his sail boat that has a 4ft draft even when staying in the center of the channel. He would like the permit to be moved along; the permit process taking over a year is too long.
- Robert Hickey stated he has a boat which is not a sail boat has 3ft draft and still hits the bottom.

Unfinished Business:

- Dredging Update – Mr. Logan gave a status on the permit. He explained that the National Marine Fisheries (NMF) has initiated a new protocol due to the small tooth saw fish. It is a federal regulation and all permits must be reviewed for the species. The county received approval from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The permit was sent to ACOE for approval; however it had to be NMF for their review first. The NMF process takes from 8-14 months once it gets to their office for review. That time frame doesn't count DEP's review time. Originally there were two permits one for a 5ft maintenance dredge and one for a 6ft dredge. The consultants tried diligently to keep the permits separate in an attempt to hurry it along; however ACOE combined the two permits into one to eliminate the need for two separate reviews. The project went to NMF approximately 4 months ago and in the worst case scenario could take as much as 10 more months. Mr. Minzer made a motion to eliminate the 5ft dredge and just move forward with the 6ft dredge; there was further discussion where Mr. Logan explained that that is essentially what was done by ACOE and it won't expedite anything at this point. The committee is concerned that the 6ft permit would be turned down and they would have to start all over again from the beginning with the 5ft permit. Mr. Logan stated the 5ft permit would not be a problem because they have had one for years and the process would not have to start over at the beginning if the 6ft permit is turned down. The current permit is a 10 year permit as opposed to the past permits being 5 year permits. Mr. Logan will follow up with NMF to see if there is a way to move this permit along. Mr. Minzer withdrew his motion. The Committee wants to contact the NMF office directly. Coastal Engineering should be the one to make the direct contact. Mr. Logan answered questions from the committee and the citizens. Ms. Harrison will update the Committee as soon as information is available.

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New Business:

- Financial Reports – Ms. Harrison advised the Committee that the new two year budget cycle for FY2015/2016 and FY2016/2017 is approaching. There will be a need to have maintenance dredge money set aside in the new 2 year budget. The committee agreed that money should be set aside to spot dredge every 2 years after the big dredge project is complete. Ms. Harrison and Mr. Logan will put together an amount to recommend for spot dredging into the FY 2016/2017 budget. Any funding that is not used during the fiscal year would roll over to the next year. There was discussion regarding the sub unit and if they should remain a sub unit or become part of this MSBU. It was explained that they are already part of the MSBU. The sub unit would pay more only if there was a project that benefited only them.

Open Discussion:

- The Committee would like for a representative from Coastal Engineering be invited to the next meeting.
- Ms. Harrison explained that the spoil sites are the responsibility of the contractor that is hired to perform the dredging and written in the specification.
- If it is determined that NMF is approachable the committee would like to schedule another meeting to discuss a plan for a personal visit to their office. The Committee was reminded of the Sunshine Law.

Citizen Input on MSBU Related Items (3 Minutes Limit)

- Ms. McIntosh asked if boaters will be able to get out while the dredging is being done. There will be access to the channel throughout the project.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Submitted by:

Sandy Wright
Public Works Department

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